

JANUARY 4, 2006

The Board of County Road Commissioners for Montcalm County held a meeting at its office located in Stanton, Michigan at 3:00 p.m. on January 4, 2006.

Present: Commissioners Dale Linton, Robert Brundage and Donald McCracken; Randy Stearns, Managing Director; Jack Johnson, Superintendent; Robert Buckowing, County Highway Engineer; and Karen Swan, Finance Director-Clerk.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to approve the minutes of December 21, 2005 as presented. Motion carried.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by McCracken, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by McCracken, to appoint Dale Linton as Chairman of the Board for 2006. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes – McCracken, Brundage. Abstain – Linton.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Linton, to appoint Robert Brundage as Vice-Chairman of the Board for 2006. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes – McCracken, Linton. Abstain – Brundage.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to appoint Karen Swan as Finance Director and Clerk of the Board for 2006. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes – McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by McCracken, to appoint Randy Stearns as Managing Director for 2006. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes – McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by McCracken, to appoint Robert Buckowing as County Highway Engineer for 2006. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes – McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by McCracken, to hold 2006's regular board meetings at 3:00 p.m. on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes – McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

Reviewed three requests to purchase service credit from MERS. Randy Stearns advised the Board that in response to the Board's prerequisite, as stated at the December 21, 2005 board meeting, the Union has provided a written withdrawal of the Union's grievance regarding the Board's decision to no longer participate in MERS service credit purchases along with a written acknowledgment and agreement that after December 30, 2005 the Road Commission will no longer participate in the purchase of MERS service credit.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to approve the purchase, by Kelly Carter and the Road Commission, of three years of generic service credit under the MERS retirement plan; said request was turned in prior to December 30, 2005. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-McCracken, Brundage.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to approve the purchase, by Tim Christensen and the Road Commission, of five years of generic service credit under the MERS retirement plan; said request was turned in prior to December 30, 2005. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-McCracken, Brundage.

Moved by McCracken, seconded by Brundage, to approve the purchase, by Rick Stout and the Road Commission, of five years of generic service credit under the MERS retirement plan; said request was turned in prior to December 30, 2005. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-McCracken, Brundage.

Charlie Braman from Crystal Township came before the Board to inquire if the Board intends to pave Colby Road (CR510A) from Vickeryville Road to Strait Tow Boulevard. Mr. Braman was advised that we had planned to double-seal the road last year; however, due primarily to a decrease in MTF funds and increased fuel costs the project was postponed. The Board further advised Mr. Braman that due to FY2006's predicted further decrease in MTF funds, which are already down almost \$90,000 for October 2005 through January 2006, and terribly high fuel costs, at this time the Road Commission has no primary roadwork scheduled for 2006 other than the three proposed projects that will be done using Federal Aid funds and then only if we receive adequate Federal Aid funding. At this time we still do not know how much we will receive from Federal Aid and if it will be enough to do all three projects. Mr. Braman asked if Vickeryville Road was one of the proposed projects, and Randy Stearns advised him that if we get the funding we plan to do Vickeryville Road from Condensery Road to Sidney Road.

Manager's Report

- The Union provided a copy of the Board's ethics policy highlighted with numerous areas they would like to see removed or changed, and I have forwarded it to our attorney, Michael Kluck. Clinton County Road Commission adopted the same ethics policy several months ago, and their union employees also had some objections. Mr. Kluck worked out a memorandum of understanding for them; however, Clinton County's employees did not ask to re-work such a large portion of the policy—I believe their main objection was regarding supplemental employment.

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- Bids are being sent out for gravel resurfacing, sweeping, catch basin cleaning, etc.—for everything except paving. The bid openings will be held on January 30th. We are going to hold off on bids for paving until we get closer to spring and see what fuel prices do and how they affect asphalt prices—right now asphalt prices are about \$10 to \$12 per ton more than last year.
- Spoke with Susan Richardson from MDOT about Federal Aid funding for 2006; she advised that they still do not know how much will be coming into the state from the feds. Dale Linton stated that he recently read that the feds have approved taking one percent of what was proposed for the states and diverting the money to the Gulf area for reconstruction of roads damaged by Hurricane Katrina.
- Reviewed a quote for a real-time GPS system that is accurate within three feet and includes a computer, software, training and installation in 29 vehicles. Randy Stearns stated that he and Dale Linton had seen the system operating in Ionia County, where it is installed in their transit system buses. After installation of the system and doing a comparison against previous information, the transit system found that they were making more runs and picking up more riders; however, their mileage and fuel usage was down compared to before the system was installed.

Engineer's Report

- Reviewed preliminary plans for Pine Valley, a site condominium project, proposed to run west off Youngman Road just south of Chase Road in Eureka Township. The developer's plans indicate a public road and they are requesting several variances from the Road Commission's standards—including a longer-than-allowed dead-end road length and a steeper grade than allowed. The Board expressed the following concerns: 1) The stopping sight distance on northbound Youngman Road south of the proposed road into Pine Valley; 2) The overall length of the proposed road is 880 feet longer than the 1,320 feet allowed in the Road Commission's standards; and 3) If the developer wants to build a longer road, have they considered utilizing the easement shown on the plans to build a connecting road to Green Timbers? The roads in Green Timbers are private—would the residents of Green Timbers be in favor of allowing it?

Commissioners' Comments

- Discussed condition of roads and how the relatively warmer and very wet weather are wreaking havoc with potholes and mud. We blade a gravel road one day and the next day it's a mess again—there isn't any frost in the roads, which is unusual, but they are saturated. Hopefully we can get the gravel roads shaped up before the roads freeze down again, but based on tomorrow night's and Friday's forecast for below freezing temperatures, it doesn't look too promising.

Moved by Brundage, seconded by McCracken, to approve the 1/4/05 bills totaling \$113,558.74 and Payroll #1 totaling \$83,719.53. Motion carried. Roll call: Yes-McCracken, Brundage, Linton.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

Chairman

Clerk